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THE BLIND IN ASIA

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for Overseas Blind

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AMERICAN FOUNDATION
FOR THE BLIND INC.

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by

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Foreword

American Foundation for Overseas Blind is very pleased to make the following manuscript available to the field. Dr. Gabriel Farrell, a member of the board of directors of American Foundation for Overseas Blind, and author of "The Story of Blindness," needs no introduction to those in this country, and in most other regions of the world, who are interested in the education and welfare of the blind. From 1932 until 1952, Dr. Farrell was Director of Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, Massachusetts, which he continues to serve as Director Emeritus. Since 1952, he has been honorary president of the International Conference of Blind Youth. During his travels abroad he has gained a first hand impression of the facilities for the blind overseas. The historical approach used for this brief work indicates his capacity for culling useful information from a mass of material.

Dr. Farrell's article is based on information he gathered some few years ago for the Lowell Institute Lectures in Boston. During recent years a tremendous growth has been evidenced both by government and private agencies in the Far East, and it seemed appropriate to supplement the data on certain countries with current developments. Therefore, at the suggestion of Dr. Farrell, minor addenda have been included by Mr. Eric T. Boulter, Field Director of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, and Mr. Paul J. Langan, Counselor for the Far East on the Foundation staff. We are indebted to Dr. Farrell for permission to do this and hope workers and students in the field will find this treatise useful as they attempt to familiarize themselves with the problems and programs of the blind in the Orient.

M. ROBERT BARNETT
Executive Director

THE BLIND IN ASIA

by

Gabriel Farrell

Although there has been a large measure of response to the challenge of the French revolutionist, Jean Jacques Rousseau, in the latter half of the eighteenth century to alleviate the lot of the blind in Europe and the western countries, the condition of the sightless in Asia is still a problem impinging on the conscience of the civilized world. While the highest incidence of the loss of sight is in Africa, where in the upper reaches of the Nile more than four thousand out of one hundred thousand population have defective vision, the greatest concentration of blindness is in Asia. With 52 per cent of the population of the world, Asia has more than 70 per cent of the total number of blind persons. The colossal size of the problem points up the need for measures to eliminate the major causes of loss of sight.

In the world conquest of blindness Asia presents a challenge. There are, however, spots of interest and endeavor and these must be understood and strengthened. Indeed, as Samuel Gridley Howe wrote a century ago, "It is a little curious that a pagan nation should have set a good example to enlightened Christians in this respect." Dr. Howe, seeking support for his new school for the blind in Boston, was anxious to avoid the attitude which he had observed in the Christian nations of Europe where "discouraged by the apparent incapacity of the blind, men have only endeavored to administer to their physical comfort in the shape of food and clothing." This he felt to be quite inadequate.

JAPAN

It was Howe's conviction that the blind with training could be employed, and to illustrate this possibility he told the story of how, in Japan, "the blind were long ago made to fill a comparably useful sphere. The government keeps a large number of them in an establishment, and their business is to learn the history of the empire through all the ages of revolt ages, to arrange it systematically by chapter and verse in their memories, and to transmit it to the young blind who are to hand it down to the next generation, and thus form a sort of perennial walking and talking library of useful historical knowledge. It would be singular and interesting," Dr. Howe continued, "to enter this library of living books and consult these breathing archives; to go up to a man instead of pulling down a folio; hear him repeat his index, and then to turn over the tablets of his memory like the leaves of a volume until he comes to the matter in question."

It is true that Japan set an example and provided a pattern for the care of the blind that differed from that of many of the early Christian enterprises. Under this pattern the blind were given unique recognition, which spared them from becoming objects of charity, and avoided the scourge of beggary which overran the countries of Europe and thrived in China. On the other hand, a recent Japanese writer has pointed out that the blind in the early days of his country were very definitely objects of pity, and that pity rather than social recognition or economic opportunity motivated most of the provision made for the sightless. It took, the writer claims, the humanitarian spirit brought to Japan by the Christian missionaries, when that country was opened to the west, to bring to the blind adequate methods of education and the conception of their possible integration into society. The story of the blind in Japan, however, is of interest because it differs from the developments in western countries.

Any consideration of work for the blind in Japan should begin with the introduction of Buddhism into that country. For this religion was brought into Japan from China in 754 A. D. by a blind priest named Ganjin-Wajo-Zo. One of the oldest Japanese portrait

sculptures still in existence and believed to have been made in his lifetime is that of the sightless priest. Buddha-like, it stands on a pedestal in the Toshodaiji Temple at Nara which he founded. At that time, many blind people turned to Buddhism perhaps because of its sightless leader but more likely because there developed a tradition that those who accepted the faith of Buddha would receive back sight or hearing, or at least have good fortune during their lives.

The foundation stone of constructive work for the blind in Japan came one hundred years later, when the fourth son of the fifty-fourth emperor, Prince Hitoyasu, born in 843, lost his sight in his twenty-eighth year. Well-versed in the Japanese and Chinese literatures and with a deep interest in music, he was, as a young man, appointed the governor of two provinces. Upon losing his sight, attributed to sorrow over the death of his beautiful and adored wife, Prince Hitoyasu turned his attention to the blind and gathered many into his court. Parties for them were held at his palace in Kyoto, then the capital of Japan, and he took delight in sharing in their music and in reciting poetry. Provision for alms to be distributed among the needy blind, inaugurated by the Prince, was continued after his death and extended to the blind all over the country by successive emperors.

The fifty-fifth emperor, Koko, brother of Hitoyasu, was so impressed by the blind men whom his brother had befriended that a special organization in memory of the blind prince was established by royal decree. Not long after this, the emperor gave orders for a row of tenements to be constructed in Kyoto where the homeless blind might find shelter. The blind were ranked as a separate class entitled to special privileges and considerations. When disputes arose between creditors and debtors, the judges were inclined to favor the debtor, but when a blind person was involved, the judges always favored him, whether creditor or debtor. As objects of pity, the evil deeds of the blind were often overlooked.

Under the patronage of the emperors, the blind in Japan were grouped in two classes. One, called Todo, was made up of laymen; while the other, composed of monks, was called Moso. The Moso class of blind monks was organized by the most famous Buddhist, Kukwai. The blind priests recited, and some still do, the epic stories

of their faith and it is said that the rise of Buddhism in Japan was due very largely to this form of indoctrination. They played the biwa, a stringed musical instrument, in the temples and traveled about the country praying that heaven and earth be eternal, the Imperial throne survive and that peace may reign over the land. And for these prayers they were paid.

Prince Hitoyasu was considered the patron of the Todo or the lay group. Organized after the pattern of the guilds of Europe, this group of blind persons exercised great power. Many government posts were reserved for its members and special taxes were levied by the government for their benefit. While blind persons were expected to pay a small fee for membership in the guild of their locality, they were exempt from government taxes. In addition to the use of blind men as walking historians and the allotting of certain offices within the government for blind persons, two fields of endeavor, music and massage, were especially reserved for the blind and these monopolies have continued through the years. Both of these skills came from China along with printing, the making of paper, the weaving of cloth and many scientific methods, all of which the Japanese have assimilated with great skill, and have made an integral part of their tradition.

Music, the more superior of the two professions reserved for the blind, came to Japan from China through Korea. Back in the eighth century, Korean Buddhist dancers and musicians came to Japan and taught koto music to many blind people. The principal musical instruments at that time were the biwa, a kind of large banjo with four strings, and the shakahaochi, a type of flute made from a bamboo rod. The two instruments, however, which later became more popular with the Japanese are the samisen, with three strings and somewhat like a small banjo, and the koto, an instrument of thirteen strings strung over a narrow strip of wood.

With frets set at various points to govern tones, the koto was more difficult to play. In the early days it was heard more often in the services of the temples; but later it became more widely used in secular circles and for what might be called popular music. Blind musicians with their kotos traveled throughout the countryside playing for the people in the little villages, as the blind strolling minstrels did in Europe. This practice has continued down to the

present generation. Japan's most distinguished twentieth century koto player was Michio Miyagi, a blind man who was unfortunately killed by falling from a moving train at Kariya City in 1956. Blind persons unable to master the musical instruments also traveled about as story-tellers. According to Otoo Huzii in his collection of Japanese Proverbs, "farmers would often come together and listen to the story-tellers and as their hearts were moved by what they heard in common, their minds became united in one bond of sympathy and understanding."

Massage, the second of the two professions reserved for the blind, had perhaps a more practical appeal than music and attracted to it those with aptitudes more muscular than musical. In addition to the massaging of the muscles of the body by methods common to many lands, the Japanese include in this area of activity two more specialized forms of occupation. The first and by far the more skilled is acupuncture, commonly called "hari," a system of penetrating needles into vital parts of the body for nerve stimulation. Developed to high skill in Japan, this practice was brought from China as early as the sixth century. The other form was "shampooing," far less skilled and usually assigned to the apprentices in the required course of training or followed by those not too successful in acupuncture.

Because of their training and skill in all of these forms, the blind masseurs of Japan were in constant demand and their services required by everyone from the Emperor to the poorest people. In the cities and in the smallest villages every morning and early in the evening the blind masseurs make their rounds announcing their approach by blowing a small whistle.

In the early days, the training required to become members of the guild of masseurs was secured by the apprentice system, and to some extent that still exists. Usually the course took approximately nine years. During the first three years, the pupil learned the massage of muscles by practicing on his master; then three years were spent acquiring the art of acupuncture; and for the remaining three years, the apprentice was on probation, being sent out to work, his master receiving half his earnings. In more recent years, the training is provided in almost all schools for the blind, as one of their special departments of vocational training. The same is now true of music.

Earnings in both of these professions have been meager through the centuries, but at least they have provided specific occupations for the blind, and thereby they have avoided some of the degradations of beggary found in other countries.

With the creation of the Meiji government in 1867, which followed the opening of Japan by Commodore Perry in 1853 and the introduction of western culture and institutions, the situation in regard to the blind changed, although there are survivals of the old tradition. While massage was a closed profession for the blind until that time, the profits possible and the development of a more enterprising spirit among the Japanese caused many seeing people to enter into that activity; and while there are still many blind musicians, the people of Japan are no longer dependent on the sightless for music. The attitude toward the blind in general has changed from one of pity with restricted vocations, to one of respect and the opening of many fields of endeavor. There is no question but that this change was due to the Christian influences which were, and still are, making a deep impression upon the people of Japan. And, if Dr. Howe were writing now, he would perhaps not be so prone to cite Japan as an example to enlightened Christians, and to attribute to paganism the provision made for the blind in that country.

Although the Christian religion was brought to Japan early in the sixteenth century by the Dominicans, Franciscans, and the Jesuits, little was done specifically for the handicapped. Their mission was to make converts. A historian of the Japanese blind reports that the first blind man to be converted, and to preach Christianity to his people, was killed by government forces in September, 1605. Reports of the missionaries of those early days record considerable martyrdom, and in fact boast that: "No country has a more glorious record of martyrology than early Japan." While exact dates of these early times are hard to reconcile with present calendars, there is record that on September 10, 1622, nine Jesuits, six Dominicans, four Franciscans, and six lay Christians were burned at the stake. This first blind Japanese Christian may indeed have been one of these lay martyrs, for he is held in high veneration by the Christians of that land even as the Buddhists revere the memory of the blind priest from China who introduced that religion into Japan almost a thousand years earlier.

In the long period prior to the new era begun in 1867, Japan had, as Europe did, within the orbit of the blind its "shooting stars on the horizon." A few of these should be mentioned. In the reign of the Emperor Suka, a blind lute player named Akashi became so famed for his skill that in 1350, he was invited to play before the Emperor. The Emperor was so pleased with his performance that he raised the blind man to a rank equivalent to archbishop. Around 1400, there was another blind musician named Takenaga upon whom the Emperor Gokomatsu bestowed the purple robe of a Buddhist priest of the highest rank. Between the years 1688 to 1703, a blind man named Suglyama, who lived in Yedo, was given an audience before the Shogun, the title of the then reigning head of the northern provinces, who told him that any request he made would be granted. The blind man asked the Shogun for one of his eyes. Apparently the request was not granted, but in compensation the Shogun raised the blind man to a high rank and bestowed an estate upon him which he named Hitotsume, which means "one eye."

Perhaps the outstanding intellectual blind man of the latter part of this era was Hokiichi Hanawa, 1746-1821, who became an historian of great merit and an authority on Chinese literature. Hanawa lost his sight at the age of seven, and his family had him educated to be a masseur, according to the practice of the time. The young man rebelled against this unintellectual occupation, and turned to the study of literature. In this field he attained great fame. A set of thirty-eight volumes of his work in Japanese is in the Perkins Blindiana Library, as well as a most interesting print which pictures him as a benign Buddha. Hanawa lived at Ban-cho and for many years the Japanese had a saying: "The sighted should ask the blind his way in Ban-cho," which means that there lived a blind man whose scholastic ability was far above that of the average sighted person.

In his historical works, Hanawa told of the great struggle in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries between the Taira and the Minamoto families. The story of this great epic had come down to Hanawa's time through recitation by the blind Buddhist priests, and he put it in writing. According to this account, the vain and glorious Taira clan was finally superseded in authority by the Minamoto

family, but the latter, according to the history, was not as helpful to the blind. Many blind officials were ejected from their public positions, and the sightless of that time fell into a low estate. One good thing came out of the situation, however, for the higher authorities ordered the local authorities to provide alms and help for the blind, which became a measure of official responsibility and the basis for future forms of financial aid.

During this period when acceptance of the blind was at a low ebb, some of the more shrewd made their way into the business of banking. To them, seeing people had to turn to borrow funds always so needed in an unsettled economy. As money lenders, the blind apparently charged high rates of interest and were unrelenting in their demands for repayment. This became one more factor in making the blind unpopular in a country where formerly through a sense of pity they were treated with uncommon kindness. It is also reported that at this time the blind began to be conscious of their class status and had their canes colored to indicate social rank.

While much about the blind of Japan in the earlier days may be lost because of the tradition of passing down history from man to man by the oral method, much may be gained through the works of art, many of which have survived. Among beautiful prints, characteristic of Japanese art, many depictions of activities of the sightless are to be found. A series of books which runs into twelve volumes, pictures in small sketches almost every phase of Japanese life. Among them may be found many glimpses of the blind,—the Buddhist priests reciting their chants, the players of the lute, the koto and the samisen; and one could almost learn massage through the detail of some of these sketches. This form of history is of great value for, to borrow a Chinese proverb, "One picture is worth a thousand words."

Japanese art also reveals that the blind engaged in massage had their differences even though enjoying a field reserved exclusively for them. On a beautiful embroidered screen, one of the treasures of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, is depicted one hundred blind masseurs swinging their long canes at one another and striking with intense fervor. Another picture of interest is a long black and white sketch which, as it unfolds, reveals the progress of the blind leading the blind. They overcome a number of obstacles, but as the last page

turns, we find the blind guide leading the other blind men disastrously into a ditch.

Something of the same sense of humor is revealed in a lovely sketch of a rather bewrinkled elephant. Blind men are seen climbing over the elephant, feeling its many parts with their hands. This picture was drawn by the famous Japanese artist, Hokusai (1750-1849). The purpose of the picture is to illustrate a well-known fable which must have come from either China or India, as elephants are rather uncommon in Japan. John G. Saxe tells the story in verse:

“There were six men of Indoostan,
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the elephant,
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.”

It will be recalled that the first blind man thought the elephant was like a wall, because he approached his sturdy side; while the second, feeling of the tusk, thought him to be a spear; and the third, happening to take hold of the trunk, thought the elephant very like a snake. The fourth, feeling about the knee, thought it was like a tree; and the fifth, who chanced to touch the ear, thought it resembled most a fan. The sixth, seizing on the swinging tail, thought the elephant very much like a rope.

“And so these men of Indoostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!”

In every aspect of Japanese life a profound change took place with the beginning of the Meiji government which started in 1867. This previously isolated country was thereafter exposed to other cultures and civilizations, and the way opened for many representatives of western countries to bring in new ideas. Some were primarily interested in the commercial possibilities, while others, especially the Christian missionaries, had a grave concern for people. The atti-

tude toward the handicapped changed and within a few years, following stimulus of the new awakening, special attention was being paid both to the deaf and to the blind.

In 1871, Yozo Yamawo, a high official of the government, proposed to the Emperor that there should be special schools or classes for handicapped children. In Kyoto, in 1873, two deaf children were given instruction by a Japanese teacher, thus marking the beginning of the education of the hard of hearing. A blind pupil was admitted to this special class in 1878, indicating that in this country, as in Europe and America, education of the deaf preceded that of the blind. The following year, the school was taken over by the Prefectural Government, and Tashiro Furukawa, a teacher in an elementary school in the city, made principal. This school, which first combined both the blind and the deaf, opened in 1879 under the name of the Kyoto Mo-a-in. Mo means blind; a, dumb; in, institute; thus, Mo-a-in was the institute for the blind and the dumb, or as they are now called, the deaf. In 1877, a school was opened in Osaka. This was established by the local government and intended to be a model school, and it was called Osaka Mohan Mo-a-gaklo. Mohan means model; Gaklo, school; thus, the model school for the blind and the dumb.

During the years 1875-1876, five men, two of them missionaries, met in Tokyo to form a society which had as its object the education and protection of the blind. Approved by the emperor, a sum of money to aid the undertaking was granted to the society. After receiving the necessary permission from the governor of the Tokyo prefecture, four acres of land were secured in 1878, and the following year a two-story brick building was constructed. The school opened on January 5, 1880. On November 21, 1885, the institution was taken over by the government and became the Tokyo Governmental School for the Blind. In 1899, the officers of the school petitioned the government to separate the deaf from the blind and so the Tokyo Government School was divided into two sections.

It is interesting to observe that the establishment of these three schools, Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto, all within a few years, followed the pattern in America, where there was a similar trio of pioneer schools established fifty years earlier. Perhaps because of the fact that the Japanese schools were founded nearly one hundred years

later than the first schools in Europe, and fifty years later than the schools in America, Japan was spared the battle of the types which so hindered constructive education in the western world.

At the very beginning of the Japanese schools, the importance of the braille system was recognized and steps taken to adapt the system to the Japanese language. Credit for this great accomplishment has been given to Kuriiji Ishikawa (1859-1944), but in this he was undoubtedly assisted by a missionary. There is record that Dr. Robert Lilley, born in Scotland in 1839, went to China in 1867, where he mastered the language of that country before moving to Japan in 1875. In order to make provision for the basic alphabet of the Japanese syllabary and the many characters of the language, the braille cell was extended to four dots instead of the traditional two. This early adaptation of the system of Louis Braille later proved unnecessary and has since been replaced by the standard six dot cell.

During the earlier periods of the schools in Japan, two courses were offered, a six year primary course and a four year secondary school course. In the first course, the usual elementary subjects were covered, while in the second course, three areas of instruction were offered: a general course, Japanese music and massage. In the last two areas, the special training which prepared the young people for these traditional professions was, and still is being carried on. In 1923, official recognition of the education of the blind came through an edict by the emperor, which set up regulations making schools for the blind, both public and private, conform to the programs of schools for seeing children.

After World War II, in the new Japan created during the American occupation, a fundamental education law was issued on March 31, 1947. The school system was reformed, and a 6-3-3-plan, six grades of elementary school, three grades of middle school, and three grades of high school was adopted throughout the country. This was applied to and set the standard for schools for the blind. On April 1, 1948, compulsory education of the blind and the deaf was provided by law. In 1949, a teacher training program was established at the Tokyo Governmental School for the Blind.

Placed under the control of the Tokyo Educational University in 1950, this school is now called the National School for the Education of the Blind. It offers three courses: a two-year course in music,

a two-year massage course, and a one-year teachers' training course. Courses for training teachers of the blind were also set up in Hiroshima University in 1950, and in 1952, a two-year course for the training of teachers was opened in Tohoku University, Sendai. According to the report made at the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth held in Holland, August, 1952, there were seventy-two residential schools for blind children in Japan, with an enrollment in June, 1950, of 4,855. This is the largest number of schools for the blind in any country, and the number of pupils under instruction is exceeded only in the United States.

Although the present educational system of the Japanese schools for the blind seems to be well established, the program suffers because of the traditional concentration on only two forms of occupation after schooling; music and massage. In both areas, the opportunities are dwindling, while the number of available blind persons qualified for these fields is increasing. One major factor in the reduction of opportunities for blind masseurs has been the entry of sighted practitioners to the profession. In an effort to restore the traditional favored position of the blind in this occupation, the leaders of organized work for the sightless have joined with the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1957 to promote the passage of a law which would grant a monopoly in massage to trained blind persons.

But many workers in Japan believe that this would represent only a partial solution to the problem and that the greatest present need is for diversification and the opening of new ways of earning a livelihood. Some of the schools, in fact, have been making an effort to do this for they are now offering in their upper high school courses training in agriculture, industry, commerce and domestic arts. This program will need a great deal of strengthening and also considerable public education. The seeing world must awaken to the need of providing opportunities for well-trained, blind Japanese youth which will enable them to retain the respect which was gained under the new Renaissance.

This challenge is being taken up by modern-day workers for the blind and by the blind people of Japan. Three national organizations have been created: The Japanese United Association of the Blind, composed of blind persons resident in all parts of the country; The Association of Educators of the Blind, made up of repre-

sentatives from almost all of the country's schools; and The Association of Welfare Institutions whose membership contains those specializing in the care and rehabilitation of the adult blind. Delegates from each of these organizations comprise the National Committee for the Welfare of the Blind of Japan which, together with the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, sponsored the 1955 Far East Conference on Work for the Blind, in Tokyo. This meeting provided for the interchange of views among eleven countries of Asia and focused public attention on the capabilities as well as the problems of the blind. In addition, there has grown a recent recognition that the steady improvement of educational and vocational opportunities for the blind depends at least in part on the availability of the necessary technical aids and appliances for instruction and training. This recognition has resulted in the operation of two manufacturing centers for such equipment and a movement toward the expansion of this special work.

Japan has always displayed readiness and ability to assimilate the ideas of other nations and to share its achievements with its neighbors. This is apparent in the country's full participation in international affairs of concern to the blind during the last decade. With its vast history of services to the sightless Japan will play an important role in the development of adequate programs for the blind in the emergent countries of Asia.

CHINA

Recognizing that so many factors that made the program in Japan unique came from China, one would expect to find similar provision for the sightless in that country. Unfortunately, that does not prove to be true. Throughout the ages, the fate of the blind in China has been deplorable and, outside of the large centers influenced by western ways, has continued in the old tradition. The history of the earlier days reveals only three opportunities for any kind of activity among the blind: the fortune-tellers, the beggars, and what are politely called the "singsong girls." The first two, from the earliest times, were organized into guilds, which continued until early in this century. The third has been under the control of unscrupulous women who are always ready to take blind baby girls

off the hands of the unhappy parents. These are placed in homes where they are brought up and trained to sing, until mature enough to walk the streets attracting men by their sing-song. Nefarious as this seems, it must be remembered that in many cases this was the only opportunity of survival for blind baby girls. The alternative was to be thrown in the river.

Dr. Richard S. French, in his book "From Homer to Helen Keller," tells the story of how the city officials of Canton, in 1912, observing the success the school founded by Dr. Mary West Niles in 1889 was having with blind girls taken from the streets, "decided that in it and not in the brothels was the proper place for blind girls. A raid was made under the direction of the police, and some seventy little girls were gathered and marched through the streets in two bands to Dr. Niles' school." Dr. Niles was unprepared for such a large number, but was ready to accept the girls if "those responsible for their coming would undertake to house them. No sooner said than done; a large matting shelter was erected at once, and a subscription was started for a permanent building which was erected soon thereafter and the girls thus permanently rescued."

It may be of interest to note that one of the girls taken into the Ming Sum School in that raid went from there to Normal School and from September, 1948, to December, 1950, was at the Perkins School for the Blind studying to perfect herself for teaching duties in the school that saved her from the fate of so many blind girls in her homeland. Incidentally, the several Chinese governments from 1912 until the Japanese entered Canton in 1938 never failed to pay the school for the education and maintenance of the girls sent to it.

In 1850, a somewhat similar incident took place but with a less fortunate ending. Under missionary direction, six blind girls were rescued from brothels in Canton. Two were sent to Philadelphia, where they remained until they died; four went to England, and only one went back to assist in carrying on work for the blind; but she was able to accomplish little because, having been brought up in England, she had lost her knowledge of the Chinese language and of the ways of her native land.

Although the Church Missionary Society of England in 1854 organized a small workshop in Shanghai, the first real school for the blind was opened in Peking in 1876 by a blind man, William

Hill Murray, who had come to China as a representative of the Scottish Bible Society. Traveling through villages and small towns, he was appalled by the condition of the blind. Mr. Murray also undertook to devise for his school a form of braille, which could embrace the four hundred and eight sounds of the Chinese language. He did this by giving a number to each sound, and after eight long years of work, Murray succeeded, and to his joy, the Scriptures could then be read by his Chinese pupils. In this work, Mr. Murray was assisted by Mrs. A. Graham, daughter of Bailie Alston, of Glasgow. This adaptation to braille was of northern Mandarin dialect. In 1910, the heads of the leading schools for the blind in cooperation with the Bible Society, drew up the Union Mandarin System of Braille, which became standard all over China.

In 1889, the famous Ming Sum school was founded by Dr. Mary West Niles. Dr. Niles, a graduate of Elmira College, after receiving her medical degree from the College of the City of New York, went to China as a surgeon under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board. Disturbed by the sad plight of little Chinese girls, she came back to Boston for training and supplies, returned, and opened the school in Canton. As the pupils in her school did not know the Mandarin dialect, Dr. Niles had to put the Cantonese dialect into braille. This she ingeniously did by reducing phonetically the many characters of the Cantonese dialect to seventy-two braille symbols. This system was later made the basis of the simplified language developed by Jimmie Yen in the attack on illiteracy in China.

In 1883, a school for blind boys had been opened in Hankow by David Hill of England and the largest school for the blind in China is at Shanghai, also under British auspices. Since then, schools increased until, according to last available reports, there were thirty schools with a possible enrollment of less than 3000 pupils. The work for the blind in China was all conducted by voluntary effort, chiefly on the part of missionaries. The government was just becoming interested in the possibility of integrating schooling for the handicapped into its educational system when war broke out. Later the work became largely disrupted through the evacuation of so many of the missionaries, although until the Bamboo Curtain closed down it was known that some of the larger schools were carrying on under native leadership.

REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Logically we might mention here briefly the facilities currently available for the education of the blind in China today on the island of Taiwan, or Formosa as it is better known in the United States. Occupied by Japan for fifty years, the education of blind children in Formosa was cared for somewhat on the same scale as in the homeland. With the island's liberation in 1945 and its subsequent role as the Republic of China, the existing program for the blind was maintained and has been widely expanded. Two residential schools for children have been in operation for many years, one in the north in Taipei, and the second in the South central part of the island at Tainan. Both are dual schools providing for the education and accommodation of deaf children as well as the less adequate facilities for the smaller number of blind children. The teaching staffs are competent in spite of none in either school having had the advantage of special training for the teaching of the blind.

The Director of the school in Tainan, however, has had previous experience in a similar school on the mainland of China prior to the war. Unable to speak the native language of the Taiwanese, he is somewhat handicapped in the administration of his program but this apparent difficulty is gradually being overcome through the government regulation establishing Mandarin as the official language of the country. Here too, as in China, the missionaries have played an important part in helping to initiate programs for the blind. Though the schools in Taipei and Tainan are supported by the provincial governments, a third school was started some years ago on the east coast at Hualien by the Lutheran Nuns and it still furnishes a course of training for some twelve to fifteen blind girls, most of whom are over normal school age.

One of the very bright spots in the development of the program in Formosa has been the braille embossing plant set up and furnished by the American Foundation for Overseas Blind in Taipei. This service is under the direction of a committee composed almost exclusively of Taiwanese and former mainland Chinese, and two representatives of western agencies. The press distributes a monthly magazine to more than six hundred readers in two editions, Japanese and Mandarin, as well as embossing all the textbooks for both

government schools. The Committee has undertaken what is believed to be the first braille edition of the Bible in Mandarin for the Chinese blind throughout the whole Far East area. Part of this project was underwritten through a contract for the Hong Kong Bible Society. With the exception of Japan, more braille material is now available in Formosa than in any other area of the Pacific.

The first scholarship student ever to come to the United States from Formosa for training at Perkins has returned to resume work in the program this year. Under his guidance and supervision, the Committee for the Blind of Formosa is currently setting up ten training centers throughout the island to offer programs of instruction and recreation to those sightless individuals not served by Taipei or Tainan facilities. In October of 1957, the Committee obtained a suitable site just outside of Taipei for the establishment of a farm school project with a grant of equipment and funds from AFOB. This unit, together with the trade school which has been in operation for the past three years, will provide a comprehensive training center for the blind of Formosa.

INDIA

Turning to India, which undoubtedly has the largest number of blind individuals of any country in the world with the possible exception of China, a unique situation is to be found. Its seventy schools with two thousand pupils compare unfavorably with Japan's seventy-four schools and five thousand students. With a blind population of more than two million, its program hardly touches one per cent of those without sight. The Indian situation differs from that of China in many ways. Most Indian parents have a real affection for their blind children, providing shelter for them and are reluctant to give them up even when there are good institutions which they might attend.

The result of this affection is that many blind children in India grow up helpless. When their parents are gone, they become beggars, hence the number of beggars in India exceeds that of other countries. "The blind have been," states a report, *Fifty Years of Work for the Blind in India*, issued by the Ministry of Education in 1952, "the objects of pity and sentimentalism, of cruelty and humil-

iation; yet they have also been treated with great kindness and occasionally given opportunities to develop their innate capabilities. They have been regarded as helpless beings, and yet some of them have been respected and acclaimed for their scholastic and other attainments."

The first establishment for the blind in India was opened in Imritsur, the city of the Golden Temple, in 1889, by Miss Annie Sharp of England. It was subsequently moved to Rajpur, Dehra Dun, where it is still in existence and is known as the Sharp Memorial School for the Blind. It is one of the few schools for blind girls in the country. This school in the north of India was followed by a school in the south at Palamcottah, opened in 1890. Both are under the auspices of the Church (of England) Missionary Society.

Another school is the Calcutta School for the Blind, started in 1897 by the Rev. L. B. Shah. Two other important schools, the Dardar School for Blind Girls, formerly known as the American Mission School for the Blind, and the Victoria Memorial School for the Blind, were established in Bombay at the beginning of the present century. These were the pioneer schools, and since their opening about sixty-five institutions for the blind have been established, making provision for about two thousand blind children.

In 1943, St. Dunstan's, the famed organization for the retraining of blinded servicemen in Britain, opened a center at Dehra Dun which was set up to serve as a reception center for Commonwealth military men blinded on the Eastern fronts and to train Indian soldiers blinded in World War II. After about 300 ex-service men had been rehabilitated and helped to become resettled in their own homes and villages, the center was taken over by the India Government and is now known as the Training Center for the Adult Blind. This was opened January 1, 1950, and about 125 blind adults from various parts of the country are in rotation undergoing training in suitable crafts for the blind. In addition to free training, the center also provides board, lodging and clothing during the period of instruction.

The present government of India is alert to the needs of the blind. In 1943, a joint committee of the boards of education and health was appointed to inquire into the causes and extent of blindness and to make suitable recommendations to the central govern-

ment. The report was made in 1944, under the able direction of Sir Clutha Mackenzie, who had made many surveys in the East. The government has accepted the major recommendations and is taking steps to implement them. Since 1955 the central government has maintained in Madras a service for the placement of the blind in open industry, more than seventy blind persons having been so placed there during the first 18 months of the program. This achievement, together with the record of industrial placement registered by the voluntary groups in Bombay, indicates that continued efforts may contribute substantially towards the solution of India's long standing employment problems among the blind.

In 1947, the Ministry of Education instituted a special unit to deal with the problems of handicapped groups, and constructive efforts are being made to provide better educational and training facilities for the blind. A member of its staff was Perkins trained Dr. Ras M. Halder, who has since assumed the position of educational attache at the Indian Embassy in Washington. In the early 1950's, the government of Madras opened three new schools for the blind and took over the administration of the former Victoria Memorial School, now known as the Government School for the Blind, Madras. In 1951, two new schools for blind children were established by the government of India, one at Ajmer and the other at Vandhay, Autch. The school at Ajmer is to be developed as a model school for all Hindi-speaking states administered by the central government. As in most other countries of the region, all of the pioneer work for the blind in India was initiated by voluntary organizations, most of these under missionary auspices. Now many of the schools formerly operated by these voluntary agencies have been taken over and are maintained by their respective state governments.

In January, 1952, representatives of the central and state governments met with delegates from most of India's schools and voluntary agencies in the First All-India Conference for the Blind. At this meeting steps were taken toward the establishment of a National Association for the Blind with headquarters in Bombay. In April, 1955, a government sponsored seminar on work for the blind was held at Mussoorie with Helen Keller as the honored guest. The major decisions of this meeting and the earlier 1952 conference emphasized the need for a rapid expansion of India's output of braille

in local languages; the production of special appliances and the introduction of well-planned rehabilitation services for newly blinded adults. At its Dehra Dun Center, the government of India has established a braille printing plant which has so far been used almost exclusively to publish school textbooks in Hindi. To help alleviate the need for adult literature and textbooks in other languages, American Foundation for Overseas Blind has donated to the National Association for the Blind a printing plant for embossed material. The government of India has requested the United Nations and American Foundation for Overseas Blind to provide technical assistance towards the improvement and expansion of its present limited facility at Dehra Dun for the manufacture of special aids and appliances.

In 1957 India's first department for the social and vocational rehabilitation of the blind was opened at the N. S. D. Industrial Home in Bombay and shortly thereafter a more extensive center for rehabilitation and training, particularly in agricultural pursuits, was established by the National Association in Jogeshwari. Toward the end of the same year, the Victoria Memorial School for the Blind and the central government completed plans for the introduction of a continuing teacher training program in Bombay for the preparation of qualified instructors for the schools for the blind of India.

BURMA

To complete the picture of work for the blind in the Far East, it is necessary to turn to some of the smaller countries where interesting developments have been made. In many of these small countries, the same pattern of lack of concern for the sightless has applied through the ages. Little was done for blind children and if they survived to maturity they were allowed to wander and to solicit alms in one form or another.

The opening of these countries, however, to western culture and especially to Christian missions, brought a concern for the handicapped and efforts were made to give to blind youth a chance to do more than merely survive. One of the most interesting stories of sacrificial help for blind children and the contribution of a single blind man is to be found in Burma. It took the heroic efforts of Adoniram

Judson, often called the greatest American missionary, to penetrate this small country as closed to outside influences as was early Japan. But it was an English missionary nearly one hundred years later who brought light to the blind, and at the cost of his own life laid the foundation for a modern school and program for the sightless.

William Henry Jackson was born on March 13, 1889. The sixth of nine children, he spent his youth in the comfortable house and gardens of Stobcross Lodge, the home of his family, outside of Greenwich, England. At eighteen months, it was discovered that the sight of one eye was gone and before he was three both eyes had been removed and "the surgeon declared the little boy would never grow up." But neither he nor the family were yet aware of the indomitable spirit that transcended the physical weaknesses of "Willie" as he was called. At five he learned Moon type, later braille, and at the age of eleven entered the Royal Normal College and came under the inspiration of Sir Francis Campbell. While there, he took a full part in all of the training offered and a larger part in the pranks of school life to a point where "it was suggested that his absence might be more welcome than his presence." At first he had intended to study law and went up to Oxford where he enrolled in Wadham College.

During his last year, young Jackson decided to enter the Church and after a year at Leeds Theological College he was ordained in 1912. After a ministry of about five years in England, his mind turned toward foreign work. Burma was the logical place, for a family friend, W. C. B. Purser, who later married Jackson's sister, was sent to that country by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1904. During 1916-1917, the Pursers were in England on furlough and during that time Jackson wrote, "I clinched to come to Burma." The journey was made with the Pursers in a slow moving World War I convoy of which two ships were sunk and a battle ensued off Port Said. But it gave Jackson time to learn the Burmese language and to formulate his plans for immediate action upon arrival at St. Michael's Mission, Kemendine, on November 8, 1917. At this mission, the Pursers had already gathered several blind boys and one girl for whom was needed the specialized leadership that Jackson could offer because of his good training at the Royal Normal College.

Father Jackson, as he was now called, immediately threw himself whole-heartedly into his work. In his second week in Burma he wrote: "I have taken part in all the life of the schoolboys as far as possible, grubbing with them on the floor, playing with them, studying with them, taking them for walks, washing their clothes for them, and trying to get into their mentality. . . . Soon I must tackle the reorganizing of the curriculum—then they will squeal; at present they don't know what work means."

Throughout his years in Burma, Father Jackson lived the life of a native because he felt that that was the only way to gain the understanding of his students. To gain the confidence of their parents and the parents of other blind children, Jackson went on long journeys, often alone, with a small handbag and a water bottle, just "to reassure parents that he had no cannibalistic intentions! So many were the rumors that were floating around in the early days of the Blind School."

In July, 1919, a new school building for the boys provided not only school facilities, but had for the older boys a club room where the Father, to tunes from a gramophone, led them in country dances, following this with light refreshments. When a native woman had been trained as a teacher, it was possible to invite other girls to join the one in residence when Father Jackson arrived. In 1924-1925, St. Dunstan's Hostel, erected through a grant from the Sir Arthur Pearson Empire Memorial Fund, provided residence for twenty adults who worked in the shops of the school. Early in his work, Father Jackson adapted braille to the Burmese language and began hand production of books. Later he introduced typing and piano tuning and the other skills that he had learned at the Royal Normal College.

But his unceasing application to his teaching; his continued determination to live on the level of his pupils, and his incessant travels in the hinterlands took a greater toll of the far from robust physique than even his sturdy and noble spirit could sustain. In May, 1923, for reasons of health, he went back to England, but his love for Burma brought him back by Christmas. On his return he was accompanied by Sidney Law, a young man of his early English parish, who took over a great deal of the work in the school for the blind.

In May, 1927, the need for an internal operation required another

voyage to England and many felt that he would never be able to come back. "But Burma called. . . . And now that he knew nothing more could be done, he was anxious to be back again to spend his last days." On his death bed at the mission, he was awarded the Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal by Sir Charles Innes, the English governor, in recognition of his work. He died December 6, 1931, at the age of forty-two. As the Bishop of Rangoon wrote, "He gave Burma a gift for ever. The work he did will stand."

And the work has indeed stood. Upon Father Jackson's death the direction of the St. Michael's School for the Blind was accepted by a young teacher, David Po Cho who had been trained in the work and had accompanied Father Jackson on many of his journeys throughout Burma. Subsequently, a board of management composed of British residents and outstanding Burmese citizens was created under the presidency of the Anglican Bishop of Rangoon. Under its auspices the academic and vocational work of the school was expanded and a second school, exclusively for the education of blind girls, was opened at Maektilla. However, both schools suffered serious damage during World War II. The Maektilla school was completely destroyed making necessary the return of its pupils to St. Michael's. There the fine workshop building originally constructed by St. Dunstan's had also been damaged beyond repair. In the post-war period, additional problems have arisen, particularly in the requisitioning of school land and buildings for the accommodation of refugees. Yet the spirit of Father Jackson survives and the St. Michael's school continues to graduate well trained fully adjusted blind people fitted to assume a normal role in society. Several such graduates in 1955 founded the St. Mary's Workshop for the Blind which operates sheltered workshops and cooperative schemes for the purchasing of supplies, sale of products and accommodations for blind adults. Largely through the activities of these groups the government of Burma has now been persuaded to create a National Council for the Welfare of the Blind which is at the present time engaged in the task of evolving a comprehensive plan for a national service program under joint government and private auspices to meet the needs of the blind throughout the country.

THAILAND

Work for the blind was introduced in Siam or Thailand six years after the death of Father Jackson in Burma. In 1937, Genevieve Caulfield, who was graduated from the Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, now the Overbrook School for the Blind in Philadelphia, and who later studied at Perkins Institution, went to Thailand after some years of work with the blind in Japan and opened a small school. This project commenced with one blind pupil in Miss Caulfield's home but with royal favor and public support it has now expanded to an enrollment of 130 students. Following World War II the school came under the management of the Foundation for the Welfare and Education of the Blind, a private agency receiving a subsidy from the central government. Its board is composed of prominent Thai citizens and foreign residents. The growth of government interest and assistance is indicated by its donation of the present fine buildings and compound, and the public has continued its interest in the school with the construction of a new addition to one of the buildings in 1957. The government which provides 25 per cent of the school's budget has lately indicated its intention of launching a program of rehabilitation and training services for blind adults as part of a national scheme for the physically handicapped. Simultaneously the Foundation for the Welfare and Education of the Blind is exploring the possibility of opening a new school for blind children in the rural area of northern Thailand.

CEYLON

Ceylon has three schools for the blind. A small school, mostly for girls, with fifteen children and two teachers, is St. Joseph's Convent for the Deaf and the Blind run by Belgian nuns of the Roman Catholic faith at Ragana. The Ceylon School for the Blind at Mt. Lavinia, formerly under British auspices, is now operated within the program of the Ceylon Council for the Blind and the Deaf, and furnishes a curriculum of high caliber for 260 students with a teaching staff of twenty-two. It has a nursery, kindergarten, primary school, post-primary school and a technical training department.

With assistance from the American Foundation for Overseas

Blind, a third school was opened in Jaffna on the northern tip of the island in September 1956. This new school started with an enrollment of forty students under the direction of a Ceylonese teacher trained in the United States. It is operated as a branch of the government supported school at Mt. Lavinia, in Colombo.

The National Council for the Blind and the Deaf maintains a number of services for blind adults including three cooperative housing developments in the Colombo area; a home industries scheme; and a home visiting program. In addition, separate sheltered workshops for men and women have been operated for many years furnishing training and employment for the adult blind. In 1956 it was recognized that these facilities should be reorganized and modernized and at the request of the council the government of Ceylon secured the services of a consultant, Mr. Edgar Marland, from the International Labor Organization. Under his leadership fine, new residential training centers and workshops were opened some twenty miles from Colombo in the fall of 1957. New trades have been introduced including plastic molding machine operation and mass production of furniture. Ceylon's first braille printing plant will shortly be installed at this location to fill the need for embossed literature for the schools and the adult readers.

PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines, work for the blind began in 1908 when a dual school for the deaf and the blind was opened by American people working under the auspices of the government. For that reason, most of the work has been in the English language and this school has always looked to the United States for supplies and guidance. Its first head was Miss Delight Rice, who later married and became Mrs. Deba Delight Rice Webber. In 1910, a Filipino, Ragenia Lagman, came to the United States to study and at the time of Japan's invasion of the islands, in 1942, Mrs. Maria V. Francisco was at Perkins Institution studying new ways.

The school started in a small house in Manila, but in 1923 occupied a large concrete building on the Bay of Pasco. It flourished during the years when Leonard Wood was governor-general, for he had a great desire to help in the education of the handicapped. During

the years of World War II the school was closed, but reopened in 1946 as a day school, although formerly it had been a residential school. At that time, there were one hundred and twenty deaf pupils and only ten blind children. In 1950, there were sixteen blind pupils. The school offers ten years of instruction, six elementary and four high school.

As recently as in the spring of 1957 little improvement in this situation was evident and, although the dormitories had been reopened and the enrollment of blind children increased to thirty-seven, it now seems quite obvious that the government or the school cannot possibly accommodate all of the blind children from the nearby communities who should be in attendance. The most practical solution to this problem would appear to be some gradual system of integrating the blind children of the islands into either special classes in the regular public schools or, until that is possible, to select a few qualified children to attend regular classes in their local schools. Such a proposal was presented to Department of Education officials in a conference on this matter by AFOB field personnel in May of 1957. The plan was accepted most enthusiastically and department heads were delegated to explore the possibility of instituting such a plan at the beginning of the current school term. It was pointed out that there already are three well qualified people in the Philippines who might be available for guidance in setting up the program who had been in this country for the Perkins' teacher training course. It is possible that one of these might well serve in the capacity of an itinerant teacher during the early introduction of the students in the regular classes and thus begin a program reaching many children in the islands who could not, in any event, attend the school in Manila even if they could be accommodated. The government has been assured by AFOB of grants of teaching materials and supplies which will enable the schools, in the rural areas particularly, to furnish a basic curriculum of studies to their blind and visually handicapped children who, until now, have never had an opportunity for any type of formal training. Such a system, if successful, might serve as an example for the whole area by overcoming the serious problem of lack of funds for providing residential facilities for these children. The development of this initial integrated program on a country wide scale will be watched with interest.

In February, 1957, a pilot and adjustment training center was formally opened with a dedication ceremony attended by Mrs. Magsaysay, the wife of the late President. This facility, which includes a small embossing plant, is now operating under the Philippine Office of Vocational Rehabilitation with AFOB providing the services of a consultant, funds and equipment. The center is offering a full program of training and work experience for more than sixty blind clients now and is serving the Far East region as a teaching and demonstration unit for preparing instructors from other countries. Trainees from Korea, Formosa and India have already had the advantage of in-service experience in the Manila center through American Foundation for Overseas Blind scholarship grants prior to returning to work in the programs in their own countries. The development of this service, it is felt, will bring forth great expansion of opportunities for the blind by providing the countries of the area with the trained and qualified personnel they have so badly needed. With the firm establishment of rehabilitation services for the blind in Manila, active steps are now being taken to create commissions for the blind in each province of the republic, whose work would ultimately be coordinated by a national council. Such provincial commissions, at least in embryo, have already commenced to operate in Zamboanga, Baguio and Cebu City.

K O R E A

In Korea, work for the blind was started by Dr. Rosetta Hall, wife of a missionary, in 1895. The school which she founded at Pyongyang City, in what is now North Korea, has faced many difficulties during its existence; its buildings were destroyed by fire in 1906, and it has struggled through wars and invasion. Dr. Hall began this first venture by teaching blind girls to read and write; and to do this, she adapted the Korean language with the simple alphabet of King Sejong of 475 years ago into braille, which enabled her to carry on her educational program.

In the early years, Dr. Hall found many difficulties due to the manners and customs of the people of the "hermit kingdom," but her indomitable spirit enabled her to keep the project alive. She served as instructor, sent students abroad to be trained as future

teachers, compiled textbooks for the blind and improved the school to meet the changing needs of the times. In 1914, her school had forty pupils, but since 1946 when the school was taken over by the government of North Korea, little information has been available about its work.

Dr. Hall also started a school for the deaf and the blind at Seoul in what is now South Korea. When Japan occupied this country, it took over all of the schools for the handicapped and reorganized them according to the pattern followed in Japan. During the occupation of Seoul by the northern invaders in 1950, several teachers from the National School for the Blind and the Deaf went to Pusan where they began teaching the blind children in that area. In 1953, the Seoul National School was reopened but a number of teachers and pupils remained in Pusan where a school has continued to function. In 1957, it took possession of a new building constructed by the Christian Children's Fund and operates on a budget allocated by the Pusan Provincial Government.

With the liberation in 1945, a school for the deaf and the blind was opened in Taegu. The Rev. Young Sik Rhee, who had been engaged in work among the lepers under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board of Missions of the United States, took charge of this venture. In 1949, Mr. Rhee opened the Lighthouse in Taegu as a center of work for the adult blind. All of these activities were later interrupted when the buildings were taken over as a hospital for the Eighth Army. In 1953, a site was secured outside the city of Taegu where a new school and adult training center was established.

During the last few years another excellent school for blind children has come into being at Chonju under the guidance of Mrs. Harry Hill, a long time Presbyterian missionary in Korea. Its work is now being expanded to include vocational training and employment of adults and it has launched a unique experiment in Korea by arranging for the admission of a number of blind pupils to the regular public high schools in the city. Other schools of mixed caliber have been established at Iri, Mokpo, Quanju, and Chaejudo.

One of the most significant features of Korea's expanding program has been the creation of the vocational training and employment project at Taejon, where a school and other welfare facilities for the blind are also maintained. Under the inspiring leadership of

Mrs. Dexter Lutz, another devoted Presbyterian missionary, the local committee, and the city and provincial governments, and other western agencies have cooperated to develop a project which can now serve as a national training center for instructors of the adult blind. Mrs. Lutz also makes a notable contribution to Korean and international cooperation as chairman of the newly established Advisory Committee for International Aid to the Blind in Korea which is composed of prominent Korean nationals and representatives of many foreign agencies.

These efforts to develop an adequate service program for the blind in Korea received significant assistance from the soldiers stationed in Korea and foreign welfare agencies. Under "Operation Good Will," American and other allied military personnel contributed not only money but their personal help for the benefit of handicapped children. At one time, one hundred and sixty children of the Pusan school were clothed by American soldiers during the occupation, and in the building of the new school in Taegu they rendered great help. The American-Korean Foundation aided some of the schools, while others received important financial assistance from the Christian Children's Fund. The American Foundation for Overseas Blind maintained a field mission in Korea for two and a half years during which time it guided the growth of the total program; introduced new teaching techniques and trades; and installed a national braille printing center in Taegu which will meet the country's needs for embossed literature.

Korea is receiving much help, but it has also given in large measure. Recall that dancers and musicians from Korea brought music as a profession for the blind to Japan, and that the art of acupuncture was Korea's contribution to the Chinese blind. Now, through the hand of fellowship extended by friends in other lands, Korea is gaining the professional and technical experience required to evolve a pattern of services designed to meet the cultural, social and economic needs of its blind citizens.

VIETNAM

Though there is little of record of the history and development of the program for the blind in Vietnam prior to the war of separa-

tion from France which ended in the divided countries of North Vietnam and South Vietnam, it is known that a good school program was established by the French in old Indo-China at Hanoi, in the northern sector. As this area is now behind the "bamboo curtain," we can only assume what might be happening there with the government in the hands of the Communists. However, in the exodus from north to south at the conclusion of the fighting, two braille stereotyping machines did end up in Saigon, and, though little use has been made of them to date, this equipment is now in the custody of responsible individuals. Though the Catholic nuns have for some years offered some custodial care to a few blind children, a school for boys over twelve years of age and young men is now being operated under the Ministry of Education in the Cholon section of Saigon with an enrollment of fifty-three students.

The curriculum extends over a maximum period of six years and consists of a weekly program of three days of academic studies; one day of music; and the fifth day devoted to industrial work making brushes and baskets. All five men on the teaching staff are blind and have not had any special training for their work. The budget for the school appropriated by the government seems adequate, though the director has not been able to encumber or receive the full allotment in the past two years. With the return this year of a Perkins trained young woman, it is hoped that the government will make some provision for the education of young children, and particularly girls, for whom no services are available presently. Accommodations for more children in the school could be accomplished if the young men who are over school age were to be moved to another facility where they could receive a fulltime schedule of regular rehabilitation training. With the new interest evidenced by the government gainful results in the program in South Vietnam may be expected.

SINGAPORE

Following the recommendation of Sir Clutha Mackenzie made in his 1952 report prepared for the crown colony, the local government together with the Singapore Association for the Blind have established a school in Singapore to provide education and training for the younger blind of the territory and a vocational training

course for senior students. The school is located on a five acre site with attractive single-story cottages, classrooms and workshops. In addition to the Malayan language, the children attending the school speak five different Chinese dialects.

The association together with the government Welfare Department cooperates in various programs of relief for the adult blind providing funds, food and clothing for those in need. A registry of the blind based on medical certification is being maintained and contains details on approximately six hundred blind people in the colony. The program and plans of the Singapore Society for the Blind receive the support and assistance of the Commonwealth Society for the Blind (formerly the British Empire Society for the Blind) which assigned Mrs. Spencer Wilkinson as Consultant for 1955-56.

HONG KONG

Two schools for the blind—the Ebenzer Home and the Honeyville Home—provide instruction and training for some two hundred and fifty blind children and adults in Hong Kong today. With uncounted thousands of refugees taking up residence in Hong Kong from the Communist mainland, the current estimate of about five thousand blind in Hong Kong is probably a gross underestimate. Many of the blind of the colony live in utter poverty and a registry established by the Social Welfare Department lists the statistics of more than eleven hundred blind some of whom eke out a living as beggars, fortune tellers, hawkers and minstrels. In 1957, a recreation club for blind children was opened by Mrs. Ruby Ko who is in charge of supervising work for the blind for the Social Welfare Department.

Following a colonial government study of conditions among the blind in 1954, the Hong Kong Society for the Blind was founded as an affiliate of the then British Empire Society for the Blind. Its initial program was designed to concentrate on medical aspects of prevention, after which voluntary and social services would be introduced. So far the society's work does not appear to have made much progress, but all concerned with the problem hope that its increasing activities will in time substantially ameliorate the present plight of the colony's blind people.

MALAYA

At Johore Bahru in the south, and Penang in the north, the Federation of Malaya has two fine, new facilities for the education of blind children. The St. Nicholas' School in Penang, established by the Anglican Church in 1926, has completed a building program during the past year and provides accommodations for forty-five children. The school has a nursery class, a primary department, and an occupational center. The Princess Elizabeth School in Johore Bahru, was opened in 1955 and has an enrollment now of sixty students. The school has a staff of five teachers, two of whom were trained in England. Music and carpentry have been added to the regular curriculum and the children have an aviary and geese, chickens, rabbits, and guinea pigs to enliven their leisure time.

Major Ronald Bridges, Government Blind Welfare Officer, has developed at Kuala Lumpur what is probably the outstanding training center for the blind in the Far East. This facility, known as the Gurney Training Center, furnishes employment and training for forty-five blind adults in a planned program of courses in basket-making, shop keeping, plaster moulding, pottery, carpentry, stenography and commercial telephone switchboard operation. The Malayan Association for the Blind, which Major Bridges also served as secretary until he completed his assignment in Malaya in August of 1957, together with the state governments, has also set up rural training centers for the blind in two outlying villages, and is now in the process of establishing a large, thirty-five acre agricultural facility capable of offering instruction in rubber, paddy and vegetable cultivation. It is certainly the hope of everyone interested in the development of broader services for the blind in this region that the new, independent government of the Federated States of Malaya will continue the progressive program initiated during the past five years by Major Bridges.

INDONESIA

Available literature in this country gives little background on the development of work for the blind on the world's largest archipelago, formerly known as the Netherlands East Indies. A Dutch colony

until 1942, and occupied by the Japanese for the next three years, the country suffered a period of four years of internal warfare until the agreement in 1949 brought independence from the Dutch and establishment of the republic. It is believed that some care was given to the blind by missionaries during the late 1800's, but it was not until 1902 that the Institute for the Blind in Bandung was founded by the Society for Improvement of the Fate of the Blind in Indonesia. Under a Dutch board of directors, the Institute during its first forty years offered a basic program of education and training in a compound accommodating both children and adults.

Taken over by the Japanese in 1945, and later occupied by the Red Cross, the Institute became a colony for the poor, the destitute, and a haven for many blind beggars who were gathered into the compound by the authorities out of necessity. In 1948 the Institute was handed back to the board. They inherited its inhabitants and the ensuing problems of their housing, their families, and their maintenance. The situation remains even more complex today, for a generation of sighted children resulting from the marriages within the compound, adds many new difficulties to the proper management of the Institute. Though the school now has a principal trained at Perkins in 1956, the transition the country is undergoing in assuming its responsibilities from the Dutch, has placed additional hardships upon any attempts to improve the situation at the Institute.

All of the braille textbooks and literature in the school library were in Dutch and English until 1950, when Bahasa became the official language of the republic. This problem is being solved temporarily by the employment of a number of blind men and women to produce single copies of hand transcribed books in the native language. In keeping with a recommendation of Helen Keller made upon her visit to the Institute in 1955, AFOB has plans to provide a modern braille printing plant to be located at the school in Bandung and to be known as the Anne Sullivan Macy Press, in commemoration of Miss Keller's beloved teacher.

In recent years, smaller schools have been reported as being established in Temanggung, in central Java, and at Klaten, and training centers for the adult blind have been opened in eight inland cities. In a country of eighty-two million people with an estimated illiteracy of 47 per cent and one of the highest ratios of national incidence of

blindness in the world, Indonesia faces a long period of adjustment to overcome the public apathy and internal problems which have so seriously prevented progress in the development of well planned programs for its large blind population.

PAKISTAN

In the years immediately prior to 1920, Mrs. Ida Rieu, wife of the then commissioner of the Province of Sind, had begun to take a personal interest in the well-being of the physically handicapped and particularly the blind. Upon her death in that year, a group of prominent residents of Karachi met to decide upon a memorial to her life and work. It was agreed that they would create a voluntary organization which would bear her name and would extend charitable assistance to the needy. In 1921, the Ida Rieu Poor Welfare Association came into being with certain aims and objectives, the most prominent of which was the welfare of the blind. With the exertion and hearty cooperation of the late Mr. Jamshed Nisservanji, and Mr. Hatiem A. Alavi, now chairman of the association, a spacious plot of land measuring 14,500 square yards was obtained from the Karachi municipality, and to this was added 5,000 square yards of adjoining land granted by the Karachi Cantonment Board. From the outset they were able to obtain the services of a highly qualified superintendent. Mr. P. M. Advani, formerly principal of the Sind National College in Hyderabad, resigned that post to join the newly founded school for the blind. He introduced Sindhi braille and was prominent as an all-India figure in the area of work for the blind.

In 1948, at the partition of the sub-continent, Mr. Advani left Pakistan for India. Meanwhile, the value of providing educational services to the blind had been recognized in other cities including Lahore and Bahawalpur, within the geographical area now constituted as Pakistan. The Emerson School for the Blind in Lahore was originally founded under missionary leadership, but has recently come under the administration of the Provincial Department of Labor, it being felt that the major responsibility of the school should be to prepare blind students for suitable employment upon graduation. This has had certain advantages but has also caused some difficulties. Endeavors are therefore being made for responsibility to be

placed in the hands of a committee which would also include representatives of the departments of Education and Social Welfare. The School in Bahawalpur continues to operate as a voluntary society but receives limited subsidy from the provincial government.

At the time of Pakistan's birth, the country found itself divided into two unconnected parts. Each of the schools already mentioned are in West Pakistan and it was not until 1957 that any specialized services for the blind were introduced into East Pakistan. In May of that year, a small school commenced to function in Dacca under the auspices of that city's Rotary Club. Two Moslem teachers were obtained from Calcutta and arrangements made for a third teacher to obtain special training in Ceylon. Consultations were launched with the East Pakistan Government with a view to the ultimate transfer of the operational responsibilities to that government.

In 1954, the first real effort was made to introduce vocational training services for blind adults in Pakistan. Then the former principal of the Ida Rieu Association's school for the blind left to form a new society known as Adult Blind Center. Utilizing makeshift accommodations, a small group of young blind men, formerly pupils of the school, were gathered together and instruction in chair caning, furniture making, net weaving, basketry and music was commenced. When the training was completed, these students remained in residence and received income from the sale of their products. Recently the ABC Board has been reconstituted and a public appeal launched to obtain funds for the construction of a fine new building on land jointly donated by the municipality and the Karachi Turf Club. The dedication of this building was planned for late 1957. During the same year a new organization known as the Pakistan Christian Blind Society was established under the Presidency of the Anglican Bishop of West Pakistan and a small school for blind children was founded at Narowal.

During a period of service as United Nations consultant to Pakistan in 1954-55, Sir Clutha Mackenzie endeavored to create a national council which would assume full responsibility for or alternatively would coordinate all work for the blind throughout Pakistan. When he left the country this had not been accomplished but plans had been made for the creation of the West Pakistan Society for the Blind in Rawalpindi, with certain clearly defined national responsibilities.

Government funds have been granted to this society but it has not yet commenced to function. There is, nevertheless, a growing realization that some system of national coordination must be introduced. To this end, a conference was held in June, 1957, at the home of the President of Pakistan and under the Chairmanship of the First Lady, to prepare the constitution of a national federation for the blind upon which all functioning agencies in East and West Pakistan, as well as appropriate government departments in both regions, would be represented. Such an organization should contribute immeasurably to the future extension of services to the blind and result in the establishment of more schools and training centers in the geographically divided country.

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Farrell, Gabriel
The blind in Asia.

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